# Victor of Cartenna

**(5th Century)**

## BRIEFING

Victor of Cartenna was a 5th-century Christian author from Africa. He was the bishop of Cartenna in the province of Mauretania Caesariensis during the reign of Gaiseric (r. 428–477). Most of his writings are lost and the little that is known about him comes mainly from an entry in Gennadius of Marseille's On Famous Men.

## SOURCES

The identification of the works listed by Gennadius with surviving texts is uncertain. Two are definitely lost: a treatise against Arianism, Adversus Arianos, addressed to the Arian king Gaiseric, and a collection of his sermons. A short work of consolation on the death of a son addressed to a certain Basil, Ad Basilium super mortem filii consolatorius libellus, is either lost or else a case of mistaken identity, derived from a misidentification of the treatise De consolatione in adversis as Victor's, since it is variously misattributed in the manuscripts to Victor of Tunnuna and Basil the Great.

The only surviving work that modern scholarship attributes to Victor is a work on penitence, De paenitentia. This work Gennadius refers to as De paenitentia publica. It came to be mistakenly ascibred to Ambrose of Milan and was first published as such. Victor, however, names himself in his closing chapter. Some manuscripts misattribute the work to Victor of Tunnuna. De paenitentia is written in a high literary style of Latin. Victor extensively quotes from Bible, usually from memory, sometimes paraphrastically.

The only English translation of De paenitentia is by John R. C. Martyn.